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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/849,028	05/20/2004	Kenji Yoshisue	056272.54929US	7048
23911	7590	01/26/2006	EXAMINER	
CROWELL & MORING LLP INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY GROUP P.O. BOX 14300 WASHINGTON, DC 20044-4300			LOCKETT, KIMBERLY R	
			ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
			2837	

DATE MAILED: 01/26/2006

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary	Application No.	Applicant(s)
	10/849,028	YOSHISUE, KENJI <i>JKW</i>
Examiner	Art Unit	
Kim R. Lockett	2837	

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --
Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

1) Responsive to communication(s) filed on ____.
 2a) This action is FINAL. 2b) This action is non-final.
 3) Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

4) Claim(s) 1 and 2 is/are pending in the application.
 4a) Of the above claim(s) ____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
 5) Claim(s) ____ is/are allowed.
 6) Claim(s) 1 and 2 is/are rejected.
 7) Claim(s) ____ is/are objected to.
 8) Claim(s) ____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

9) The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
 10) The drawing(s) filed on ____ is/are: a) accepted or b) objected to by the Examiner.
 Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
 Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
 11) The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

12) Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
 a) All b) Some * c) None of:
 1. Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 2. Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. ____.
 3. Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

1) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)	4) <input type="checkbox"/> Interview Summary (PTO-413) Paper No(s)/Mail Date. ____.
2) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)	5) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
3) <input type="checkbox"/> Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08) Paper No(s)/Mail Date ____.	6) <input type="checkbox"/> Other: ____.

1. *Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103*

1. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

2. Claims 1 and 2 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Stein in view of Ballet.

Stein discloses the use of a back check for use in a piano for locking a hammer in a pivotal movement for returning after said hammer has struck a string (11) to prevent said hammer from rebounding, said back check comprising: a back check body disposed at a location at which said hammer is locked, extending in a vertical direction, and having an adhering surface which rises in a central portion thereof in the vertical direction (column 5, lines 1-20).

Stein does not disclose the specific use of an under felt adhered on said adhering surface of said back check body; and sheet-like cushion material adhered to said back check body to cover said under felt, said cushion material being formed with a locking surface in a predetermined curved shape conformal to said adhering surface for locking said hammer.

Ballet discloses the use of an under felt adhered on said adhering surface of a perforated back check body; and sheet-like leather cushion material adhered to said back check body to cover said under felt, said cushion material being formed with a

locking surface in a predetermined curved shape conformal to said adhering surface for locking said hammer (column 1, lines 57-71) (see figure 1).

It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to modify the back check as disclosed by Stein to include the cushion material as disclosed by Ballet in order to allow the hammer and back to engage each other for an undetermined period of time.

Papers related to this application may be submitted to Group 2800 by facsimile transmission. Papers should be faxed to Group 2800 via the PTO 2800 Fax Center at 703-872-9306.

For assistance in **Patent procedure, fees or general Patent questions** calls should be directed to the **Patents Assistance Center (PAC)** whose telephone number is **800-786-9199**. Assistance is also available on the Internet at www.uspto.gov.

Any inquiry concerning **this communication or earlier communications from the examiner** should be directed to **Kim Lockett whose telephone number is (703) 308-7615, after 2/3/04 my new number will be (571) 272-2067**. The examiner can normally be reached on Tuesday through Friday from 6:30 am to 5:00 pm.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, David Martin can be reached on (571) 272-2107.



KIMBERLY LOCKETT
PRIMARY EXAMINER